

INTELLIGENCE

CONFIDENTIAL

CLASSIFICATION

SECRET

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

## INFORMATION REPORT

REPORT

CD NO.

25X1

COUNTRY Bulgaria

DATE DISTR. 29 May 1951

SUBJECT Report on the Bulgarian Army: Organization; Mobilization; Training; Discipline and Morale.

NO. OF PAGES 7

PLACE ACQUIRED

NO. OF ENCLS.  
(LISTED BELOW)

DATE OF INFO.

SUPPLEMENT TO  
REPORT NO.

25X1

THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS INFORMATION AFFECTING THE NATIONAL DEFENSE OF THE UNITED STATES WITHIN THE MEANING OF THE ESPIONAGE ACT OF 1917, SECTION 7, AS AMENDED. IT IS UNLAWFUL TO REVEAL OR DISCLOSE ANY OF ITS CONTENTS IN ANY MANNER TO AN UNAUTHORIZED PERSON OR TO PUBLISH BY LAW. REPRODUCTION OF THIS FORM IS PROHIBITED.

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

25X1

The High Command of the Armed Forces

1. The high command of the armed forces comes under the Ministry of National Defense, which has as its chief Lieutenant General Peter Panchevski, a Bulgarian who was a former Soviet officer and who graduated from the military academy in Russia. The actual command and direction of the army is in the hands of the military section of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party. The functions of the Minister of National Defense are more administrative and political than military. The actual military direction of the armed forces is in the hands of the Chief of the General Staff. The Minister of War, or Minister of National Defense, has three assistant ministers who are also generals. The Ministry of National Defense has the following known divisions:
  - a. Political Directorate of the Army - Headed by a Communist general, this division is organized on the pattern of the Soviet counterpart. It is charged with propagandizing Communism in the armed forces and also conducts party espionage within the armed forces. This division has at its disposal the officers who have graduated from the Institute for Political Officers as well as all members of the Dimitrov Union of People's Youth who are in the armed forces.
  - b. Chancellery of the Ministry - In this division appointments, promotions and dismissals from military service are effected. This division also is charged with the issuing and dissemination of military orders.
  - c. Infantry Division - Formerly called the Infantry Inspectorate.
  - d. Artillery Division - Formerly called the Artillery Inspectorate.
  - e. Signals Division - Formerly called the Signals Inspectorate.
  - f. Airforce Division
  - g. Armored Division
  - h. Naval Division

Document No. 3
No Change in Class. <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Declassified
Class. Changed To: TS 5 C
Auth: MR 70-2
Date: 7 AUG 1978
By: _____

25X1

CLASSIFICATION SECRET

STATE	X NAVY	X NSRB	DISTRIBUTION					
ARMY	X Ev	X AIR	X FBI					

CONFIDENTIAL

SECRET

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

25X1

- 2 -

- i. Training Division - This division is charged with the formulation of scholastic programs among the troops, plans, rules and regulations, conduct and supervision of military schools and establishments, and all those on active service who have stipends of one kind or another.
- j. Military Justice Division - This division is charged with the supervision and operation of military courts, military jurors, and military laws and regulations.
- k. Sustenance Division - Equivalent to a quartermaster unit, this division is charged with the supply for the armed forces of everything they need for peacetime and wartime use of the troops, and the supervision of the military factories and workshops.
- l. Armed Forces Sanitary and Veterinary Division - This division is charged with the maintaining and establishing of hospitals, aid centers, and furnishing the individual soldier with sanitary materials. It is also charged with furnishing the army with horses.
- m. A group of sections as follows:
  - 1) Ordnance Section
  - 2) Military Cemetery Section
  - 3) Foreign Military Attaché Section

Mobilization

- 2. The peacetime composition of an infantry regiment is two battalions, which in time of war are augmented by an additional infantry battalion. The same composition is true of the other branches and arms. The drafting of new soldiers, the mobilization of reserve soldiers, and the supervision of the reserves is accomplished through the medium of so-called military districts. The entire country is divided into approximately 30 such military districts which in turn fill quotas for all arms and branches. The first and second military districts are located in Sofia in the former barracks of 1 and 6 Infantry Regiments, respectively.
- 3. The bringing of units up to table of organization strength is accomplished through the so-called territorial system, as follows: If, for example, 1 Infantry Regiment from Sofia needs additional troops, it will call up soldiers from outlying districts, and in a similar manner Sofia residents will in turn be sent to garrisons far from Sofia. There are two reasons for adopting this system. One is that, in case of war, the casualties will not be from the same town, city, or area; and the second reason is that the Communist Party does not fully trust the mass of Bulgarian soldiers.
- 4. Attached to every people's council (municipal) is a special section for military service and labor service. This section keeps records of all youths in the entire community who have attained their seventeenth year; and each year, in the vicinity of the municipal courthouse, lists are posted with the names of the youths from the district who are eligible for military service. This is done in order that each youth can check the list himself and make sure name and data are correct; if there is a mistake of any kind, each youth is charged with informing the military section of the people's council of any such errors.
- 5. The corrected and completed lists are then sent by the people's council to the appropriate military district. After receiving the list the military districts form so-called draft commissions composed of the following:
  - a. President - who is also the chief of the military district or the deputy chief of the military district.

SECRET

SECRET

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

25X1

- 3 -

- b. The president of the people's council.
- c. A number of doctors and a representative from the Communist Party.

The youths are called up by the people's council who pass them on to the draft commission. The draft commissions are mobile but ordinarily stay in a more central, heavily populated town to which the local youth of the surrounding area report.

6. Upon appearing before the draft commission each youth must fill out a large questionnaire which contains many types of questions, including name, date of birth, family and material position, income, specific place in life (laborer, farmer, small, middle or large bourgeois), his entire biography, membership in any organization, connections with the Fatherland Front, what members of his family have suffered from the Fatherland Front, and similar data. After filling out this questionnaire, each member is given a medical examination, the results of which are written on the back of the draft notice by the president of the draft commission. The comments put on the back are either GFS (good for field service) or GNS (good for non-field service); in some cases "not acceptable" is put on his record. The president of the draft commission also is charged with assigning the individual to the arm or branch wherein the youth should serve, depending upon his questionnaire and the need of the various units within the army. The youth, however, is not informed of the location where he is destined to serve.
7. One month after the draft commission completes its work, various control commissions come into being whose job is to again review each questionnaire and take up special cases, such as, deferment and request for change of category. They also consider people who have been considered in past years unfit for military service and who may, by now, have been properly hospitalized and cured. University students come under this category, as they must obtain deferment for each scholastic year. Between one and two months before the youth is ordered to the barracks he is sent a draft notice which designates where and when he will appear for duty.
8. Reservists are treated in the same manner and through the same channels. Each military district keeps special dossiers for all reservists in which are entered all data concerning the reservists which have been obtained through the Voenna Osvedomiselnaya Slozhba (Military Informational Service), especially concerning his political life. Every member of the reserve is equipped with a "voenna knizhka" (military book), which is red for reserve officers and green for non-commissioned officers and soldiers. In this book are entered all the data concerning the reservist and the number assigned to him in the reserve, as well as the exact location where he will go upon being called to active duty. During 1948 a large scale examination was conducted of all reservists in the country to re-evaluate their political reliability. The draft commission interviewed every case, even the prisoners who were reservists.
9. At the end of 1950 the Government established special examination commissions for reserve officers. These commissions were still conducting their work at the end of January 1951. Former officers of the old army were examined carefully and interrogated fully as to their present position and thoughts, what their work was, and what attitude they had toward the Fatherland Front. They were also asked what they would do if the Fatherland Front asked them during time of war to command fighting units. It was the opinion of the reservists brought before these commissions that the Government is trying to screen all reservists who had been let out of active service, because the army was very low in trained officers.
10. The equipping of mobilized reservists is accomplished through regimental supply stations. In time of war these supply units will be moved into the small towns in the area where the mobilization is taking place. Besides these regimental supply depots there are also the divisional and army depots. At the present time one large army depot of clothes and shoes is located in the village of Chelopechene, near Sofia.

SECRET

SECRET

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

25X1

- 4 -

Training and Military Schools

11. The Vasil Levski Military School in Sofia, trains future regular infantry, engineer, signal, and cavalry officers. Admission to this school is based on competitive examinations; each candidate who appears before the board of examiners must have finished high school. The present criteria for entrance are far different from those established right after 1945; many of the officers serving today have little or no education. These officers may or may not have graduated from grade, grammar or high school. After a one-year course in the military school, they are appointed directly as officers in the army with ranks from lieutenant to general, depending upon their guerrilla activity and the confidence reposed in them by the Communist Party. They also must have a recommendation from and hold membership in the Dimitrov Union of People's Youth.
12. During the fall of 1950, when the new class was being inducted into the military school, not enough applicants had applied to fill the quota and, therefore, many candidates were ordered to appear for competitive examinations by their respective people's council. The people's council would then automatically send the youths to the school to become "kursanti" (the name for what was formerly called a "yunker"). One example is the case of the son of a certain Mr. Petrov who was a pro-gymnasium teacher in the Aprilov School located on Shipka Street, Sofia. The teacher was a non-partisan and non-political person, but his son was sent to the military school upon orders of the 5th District People's Council in Sofia and was sponsored by the people's representative Ivanka Georgieva. This was done despite the youth's specific request that he be allowed to study engineering in the polytechnic school.
13. The course at the Vasil Levski Military School takes three years. During the first year a general study of military matters is undertaken, as well as general infantry preparation. During the second year the students are appointed to their various branches. Throughout the entire course extensive political indoctrination is effected with the ideal of establishing a corps of politically firm officers. The present training schedule at the military school is such that a student rarely has any time to be by himself. During the summer the school goes out into the field for three to four months to practice practical field problems, mainly in the area of Bankya, which is near Sofia. The students who have completed the course at the military school are promoted to the rank of junior lieutenant.
14. The Artillery School is located in the building formerly housing the Reserve Officers School in Sofia (Lozenets). This school trains all artillery and anti-aircraft artillery officers. The curriculum and method of operation is the same as that of the Vasil Levski Military School.
15. There is a tank school in Botevgrad which trains future tank officers, as well as non-commissioned officers, mechanics, and other specialists of the armored forces. The chief technical advisor of this school is Major Nachko Poushkov. All training at this school is done with the Russian T-34 tank.
16. An aviation school for officers and non-commissioned officers is located in Kazanluk and has branches in Karlovo, for fighter pilots, and Bozhurishte.
17. At the Naval School located in Stalin (Varna) the naval officers for the fleet are trained.
18. The Hristo Botev School for reserve officers is located in Turnovo in the barracks of 18 Infantry Regiment and the former Non-Commissioned Officer Reserve School. This school trains reserve officers for all branches of the service and qualifications require that each candidate must have finished high school. The school lasts one year, at the end of which

SECRET

SECRET

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

25X1

- 5 -

time each candidate is sent out to various regiments for practical work until the end of his service. Because of the lack of qualified officers, the highest scholastic ranking reservists are often informed that they have been chosen to remain on active duty.

19. Schools for sergeants exist in every regiment and specialist sergeant and non-commissioned officer schools exist under each division. Each year special courses for the training of sergeants are conducted, lasting from five to six months. During this period the sergeants are placed in charge of training lower ranks. At the termination of their term of service the better sergeants and noncommissioned officers are allowed to remain on active duty if they so desire.

20. The Higher Military General Staff Academy is located in Sofia and maintains its quarters in the Vasil Levski Military School. This academy is responsible for the training of future general staff officers. The candidates must undergo a competitive examination, requirements for which are that they must have served between four and five years as officers and have good recommendations from their commanders. The course is three years long and the program encompasses strategy, military geography of the Balkans, tactics, administration of troops, mobilization, transportation, with special emphasis on tactical problems and military maneuvers. Until the beginning of 1949 all tactical problems were mainly attack problems which assumed that the Bulgarian forces were three times stronger than those of the adversary and that there was equality in air strength. From 1949 on, the problems have mainly concerned defense, under the general assumption that the adversary is three times stronger and possesses air superiority. During 1950 the maneuvers included officers from engineer regiments who participated in the defense games. The present teachers in the academy are mostly former general staff officers from the old army, who number about 60 persons. They are dressed in officers' uniforms but wear a special stripe on their epaulet. Those students who stand scholastically high and who are politically pure are sent to the USSR where they are placed in the various specialized military academies. At the present time there are approximately 100 Bulgarian army officers who have completed courses at such Russian academies.

21. The training of the soldiers is completed in each individual regiment. The individual's training lasts from three to four months, during which period the following topics are studied: weapons study; tricks with weapons; battle conditioning of the individual soldier; range firing with rifle; light machine-guns and grenades; general military information, including military courtesy and discipline; study of the military guide book; garrison duty; and political preparation. Generally each recruit who finishes such a course comes out as a very good soldier, who knows his weapons and how to fire them. Each soldier during this period fires approximately 150 live rounds of ammunition. After completion of basic training of the soldier, the units then proceed to squad, platoon, and company training. The units are assigned to various camps towards the end of May and remain there until October, at which time they again return to their proper barracks. During this summer period each unit undergoes battalion, regimental, and divisional maneuvers in conjunction with the various other armed services. During this training in the field much attention and stress is placed upon the political preparation. Training of specialists is accomplished in each regiment by forming special schools for whatever specialists are needed by the regiments, such as radio telegraphists, drivers, machine-gunners, and mortarmen. In January 1951 a new system was introduced for making non-commissioned officers, based on the Russian pattern. Since the term of service has been lengthened significantly, the army released many of their non-commissioned officers or transferred them into other service and replaced them with well-trained soldiers, without rank.

Discipline, Morale and Recreation

22. Subsequent to 1944 the Communists purposely allowed a certain laxness to exist in the army. Today, however, an extremely raw and strong discipline

SECRET

SECRET

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

25X1

- 6 -

is being enforced; for the smallest infraction of regulations the soldier is severely punished. Just as it does with the civilian population, fear rules; and this fear is mainly instilled by the political commissars. A soldier who is caught complaining about anything is placed under arms with full field pack for a number of days, during which he must stand at attention with his full field pack for one or two hours daily. This punishment is usually effected out in the sun and in the middle of the parade ground where everyone can see and learn a lesson. Other punishments are the taking away of leave and pass privileges, garrison arrest, post stockade, or stripping of rank. The stripping of rank also applies to officers, who may be reduced to the lowest rank within their category; thus a captain can be reduced to a second lieutenant. Punishments also include garnishing a portion of the pay; sending the person for a specified period to hard labor in mines or supervision in mines; working in quarries; or working in the fields. There are special disciplinary companies for this purpose and the Communists use these to a great extent. Time served in punishment is not considered as military time, and, at the end of one's service, the days spent under arrest or detention must be served out. The Communist authorities do not recognize the doctrine of not punishing an officer in front of his subordinates. For example, during the month of January 1951 a group of officers from an armored regiment were punished by the garrison chief before the entire regiment. They were forced to do close order drill, calisthenics and roll in the mud in the courtyard of the barracks. As a result they became the laughing stock of the regiment.

23. There are two kinds of leave granted by the Bulgarian army, town leave or home leave. The town leave is usually for a certain number of hours in a city or town, especially on ordinary holidays. Home leave is usually given for a period of ten to fifteen days. In comparison with the old practice of the Bulgarian army, the present leaves are very short; in some cases a soldier has not seen his family for one or two years. The reasons for this are: to keep the soldiers prepared for battle; and to prevent the soldier from observing at home the unhappiness and misery of his loved ones and returning with an anti-Communist disposition.
24. Because of extending the time of service, soldiers from the senior classes receive a certain amount of monetary compensation, usually between 2,000 and 3,000 levas a month, to help their families. To the extremely poor families the people's councils send money or food products. The amount of money and food sent by the people's councils is, however, extremely minute in quantity and merely represents a symbol of what Communism is supposed to do for the family; therefore, such families exist in extreme misery and unhappiness.
25. To reduce passes and leaves to a minimum, soldiers are taken in groups to sport festivals, cinemas, or theaters. Besides this, each unit has a sports group which arranges competitions with other members of the unit and between units. In the army there exists a so-called soldiers' theater which visits garrisons and gives various plays or sends small groups of actors, musicians, or dancers to the barracks. They also use a limited number of movies. This entire program of recreation is under the direction and control of the Political Directorate of the Army.
26. The majority of the soldiers stem from peasant stock and they bring into the army the spirit of unhappiness present in the mass of the peasantry; they are fully aware of the forcible taking away of their fathers' land and the forming of cooperatives and that the government is taking food from the peasant population who have labored so hard to cultivate this food. They are also aware of the fact that their fathers or brothers or other dear ones have been sent to concentration camps or prisons. One of the reasons for prolonging the term of service and using harsh disciplinary measures is in an attempt to suppress and control any desire for revolt. The new officers are especially harsh with their troops.

SECRET

**CONFIDENTIAL**~~SECRET~~

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

25X1

- 7 -

Despite the continuous propaganda and political training, the morale of the soldier today is extremely low and the situation will become worse when large new numbers of unhappy citizens are inducted into the service. This is well known to the Communist authorities, but they can do nothing to wipe out the basic reason for this unhappy frame of mind. In order to combat it, they have set up a regime of terror by which they hope to keep the soldier under control.

27. Rebellion on the part of individual soldiers is increasing. As an example of this, during the summer of 1950 two candidate non-commissioned soldiers officers of 22 Infantry Regiment in Dupnitsa tore off their stripes in front of the entire regiment, tore them to shreds, threw them on the ground, and stamped on them as an expression of dissatisfaction against prolonging the term of service. During the summer of 1950 a Trudovak officer, from the Radomir labor battalion, was called a kulak's son by the commanding officer, a major; the Trudovak took his spade and cut off the major's head, after which he disappeared into the hills. During June 1950 in 13 Infantry Regiment a conspiracy of 30 soldiers was uncovered. When it was discovered they were hiding weapons. A portion of the group ran away and crossed into Yugoslavia. There was also a soldiers' conspiracy in an armored division. Another recent conspiracy was made up almost entirely of officers who favored Tito. Under present conditions and considering the morale of the troops, it is almost a certainty that, in the event of armed conflict, dissension and rebellion within the Bulgarian army will be on a much larger scale than anticipated.

~~SECRET~~**CONFIDENTIAL**